not only possible hut probable that the transition from slave labor society to free labor society would have been greatly facilitated by a sense of necessity, as well as by the important circumstance that at that period the relations between the whites and blacks were still comparatively kind and forbearing. Even negro suffrage in a qualified form, as General Lee's testimony before the Reconstruction Committee showed, might then have been accepted as a peace offering.

But the propitious moment was lost. Instead of gently persuading the Southerners, as Lincoln would have done, that the full restoration of the " States lately in rebellion " would necessarily depend upon the readiness and good faith with which they accommodated themselves to the legitimate results of the war, and that there were certain things which the victorious Union Government was bound to insist upon, not in a spirit of vindictiveness, but as a simple matter of honor and duty—instead of this, President Johnson told them that their instant restoration to their old status in the Union, that is, to complete self-government and to participation in the National Government on equal terms with the other States, had become their indefeasible constitutional right as soon as the insurgents laid down their arms and went through the form of taking an oath of allegiance, and that those who refused to recognize the immediate validity of that right, were no better than traitors and public enemies. Then nothing could have

been more
natural than that the master class in the South
should have seen
a chance to establish something like semi-
slavery, and that,
pressed by their economic perplexities, they should
have eagerly
grasped at that chance. No wonder that,
encouraged, if not
directly called upon by the President to do so, they
should have
vehemently demanded, as their right, the instant
permission to
dispose of their home concerns as they pleased,
and to take